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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 KHARTOUM 000480

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DEPARTMENT FOR AF A/S FRAZER, AF S/E NATSIOS, AND AF/SPG  
NSC FOR PITTMAN AND SHORTLEY  
ADDIS ABABA ALSO FOR USAU

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TAGS: PREL PGOV PHUM KPKO SU UN AU

SUBJECT: SUDANESE GOVERNMENT: SET A FIXED TIMELINE FOR  
NON-SIGNATORY NEGOTIATIONS

Classified By: CDA Cameron Hume, Reason: Sections 1.4 (b) and (d)

¶1. Summary: CDA Hume met with presidential advisor Maghzoub al-Khalifa on March 26 to discuss Sudanese government plans on Darfur in light of the current visit of special envoys Eliasson and Salim. Al-Khalifa called for renewed international cooperation on DPA implementation, including assistance with mapping active forces on the ground. He characterized the security situation on the ground as improving, though still difficult. Confirming Sudanese government support for Vice President Kiir's proposed Juba conference, al-Khalifa also called on the special envoys to announce their own fixed timeline for beginning negotiations with non-signatories. Al-Khalifa noted that the Sudanese government would consider releasing Suleiman Jamous after the political process has begun. End summary.

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MILITARY, LOGISTICAL SUPPORT  
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¶2. CDA Hume opened the meeting by noting that while violence has generally decreased in Darfur in recent months, especially North Darfur, the security situation remains very tense. The IDP camps are becoming increasingly militarized, and leadership on the ground is weak. CDA Hume asked El Khalifa to characterize the Sudanese government position on a "way forward" and offered to present those views to the special envoys in his upcoming meetings.

¶3. Al-Khalifa called for the international community to immediately concentrate on implementing the Darfur Peace Agreement (DPA). He specifically requested that international military observers, including the AU, UN and US, come in to Darfur and map the positions of all factions operating on the ground. This should have occurred before the DPA was signed, he said. Al-Khalifa also maintained that the Sudanese government is ready to give non-military "logistical and moral" support to the Darfur signatories in order to help prepare the ground for UN peacekeepers, with the caveat that UN troops are in country to "keep" peace and not "make" it. (Note: Al-Khalifa gave CDA Hume a copy of an 11-page "road map" on Darfur, which alludes to a hybrid operation backed by UN technical support. End note.)

¶4. CDA Hume called al-Khalifa's request for international assistance in mapping active forces "reasonable," reminding him that the US currently has military observers already in the field. CDA Hume suggested a visit to Sudan by RDML Hart, which al-Khalifa immediately welcomed. (Note: Al-Khalifa offered to facilitate this visit; post understands this to mean expedited visa issuance. End note.) CDA Hume reiterated

that there will be no funding for UN PKOs without UN command and control, but suggested that the Sudanese government consider other areas where flexibility might be possible.

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SECURITY IN THE THREE STATES  
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¶ 15. On security, al-Khalifa admitted that the situation in Darfur was very difficult though unique in each of the three states. The relative calm in North Darfur is a result of tougher government efforts at policing, he said. He claimed that while West Darfur is seeing problems of banditry, especially in the area between Geneina and Kulbus, INGOs have had no incidents when accompanied by the SAF. Al-Khalifa pointed to tribal conflicts as the source of much of the violence in South Darfur, including between the signatories themselves in Zaghawa. Security is the underlying cause of the humanitarian crisis, he said, and repeated his request that the international community put more effort into helping on the ground. "Let us come together on this, and it will allow us to rebuild trust," he said.

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AU/UN TIMELINE, RELEASE OF JAMOUS  
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¶ 16. On the topic of a commander's conference, al-Khalifa said that the Sudanese government is willing to negotiate with non-signatories. Its position is to encourage field commanders to come together as "Darfurians," he said. He praised VP Salva Kiir's upcoming initiative, saying that it was important to set a specific date to bring all the leaders together. Al-Khalifa was somewhat dismissive of the Libyan proposal to bring high-level envoys to Tripoli next month,

KHARTOUM 00000480 002 OF 002

calling it more ceremonial than substantive. The Libyans would not be able to adequately prepare for such a meeting, he added.

¶ 17. Al-Khalifa suggested that Eliasson and Salim could add to Kiir's efforts by announcing a firm timeline for an AU/UN-sponsored meeting. Those commanders who don't attend could be considered part of a legitimate political opposition, he said, but they cannot be fighters. On its part, the Sudanese government would be willing to ask neighboring countries to support such a meeting. Eliasson and Salim need to "put something on the table," he said.

¶ 18. On Suleiman Jamous, al-Khalifa called him a "good friend" but maintained that the time was not yet right to release him. He described Jamous as a "local" politician with significant tribal influence, someone who would not be content to simply bide his time in Khartoum. Al-Khalifa intimated that the Sudanese government regards Jamous as untrustworthy, as well as an NCP defector. He suggested Jamous could play a useful role once the political process has begun and after the commanders have agreed on a unified position, but not before.

HUME